form in each, or whatever the favourite set of ratios of proportion, usually pervades each whole monument, as it may be generally traced in a few detached mouldings. Styles, therefore, may be regarded as storehouses of experiments tried, and results ascertained, concerning various methods of conventionalising, from whence the designer of the present day may learn the general expression to be obtained, by modifying his imitations of nature on the basis of conventionalised experience, instead of his own wayward impulses alone. Canova, Gibson, and many of the greatest masters in art, held and hold the creed, that nature, as developed in the human form, can only be rightly appreciated by constant recurrence to, and comparison with, the conventionalities of the ancient sculpture of Greece. Mr. Penrose has shown us what beautiful illustrations of optical corrections in zinc may be gathered from the study of her architectural remains. Mr. Dyce, who has made himself deeply acquainted with ancient styles, thus expresses himself on the subject:—"In the first place," he remarks, "the beauties of form or of colour, abstracted from nature by the ornamentist, from the very circumstance that they are abstractions, assume, in relation to the whole progress of the art, the character of principles or facts, that tend, by accumulation, to bring it to perfection. The accumulated labours of each successive race of ornamentists are so many discoveries made—so many facts to be learned, treasured up, applied to a new use, submitted to the process of artistic generalisation, or added to. A language and a literature of ornamental design are constituted; the former of which must be mastered before the latter can be understood; and the latter known before we are in a condition to add to its treasures. The first step, therefore, in the education of ornamentists, must be their initiation into the current and conventional language of their art, and by this means into its existing literature." By this last passage, we may fairly assume that Mr. Dyce would recommend first, the study of the student's specialty, and then, as much as life is long enough to learn. The great previous error in art-education has been to grasp at so much vaguely, and attain so little practically.

The modifications which nature receives at the hands of the intelligent sculptor are so various, and frequently so subtle, that it would require a volume to enumerate them and an Eastlake to write it. To night we can glance but at a few. The first condition of the highest class of sculpture is, that it should be allied with the noblest architecture, to which it should serve as an inscription, explaining to those capable of reading its ideal expression, those purposes of the structure which it is not in the power of architecture alone to convey. In all such cases *fitness* prescribes the subject—*simplicity* its sublimest treatment—*contrast* the general conditions of the lines of its composition. In order to give to his works that commanding language which speaks to the heart (the phonetic quality in Mr. Fergusson's admirable theory of beauty in art), the sculptor requires to select from his observation of the expression of individual forms, those precise lines, he learns from study and experience, it variably convey the peculiar sensations it is his office to communicate to the mind of the beholder. It is by some such process that an approach was made by the Greek sculptors of old to an embodiment of their conceptions of divinity, and arrive at the *beau ideal* in loveliness of form. Time will not permit a longer reference to this topic, but it may be found touched upon with the utmost acuteness and good taste in an article on physiognomy in the last number of the *Quarterley Review*, written, if any confidence may be placed in internal evidence of style, by one worthy in every respect to occupy herself in kindred studies to those which engage the attention of the president of the Royal Academy. Among the works of sculpture in the Great Exhibition which displayed the most perfect mastery over the just combination of ordinary and ideal nature, especial attention may be drawn to Gibson's and Jerichau's hunters; Foley's Ino and Bacchus, and boy at the stream; Bell's eagle-slayer; M'Dowell's Eve; De Bay's first cradle; and Wyatt's nymph, Glycera.

The peculiar refinements of form and texture which fall within the especial province of the sculptor to carry to their highest pitch of perfection, he constantly heightens by availing himself of the effect on the senses of the simultaneous contrast of form. Thus, he exaggerates the roughness of the hair and the coarse texture of every object coming in contact with his flesh, in order to give to it the exquisite smoothness of nature; he introduces straight lines, equally-balanced folds, and angular breaks into his draperies, in order to bring out the tender sweeping curves of the outlines of the limbs he so gracefully disposes. His is of a truth the happy art which begins by collecting all that is most sweet and fresh; and then, by one additional touch, one further artful contrast, adds still "more scent unto the violet." In sculpture, as in every other of the decorative arts, changing circumstances bring over changing conventionalities, and as supreme arbiters over the propriety of one and all, still preside our original great principles—*variety, fitness, simplicity, and contrast*.

In turning to those departments of practical art into which sculpture enters as a predominent ingredient, metal-work first presents itself to our notice. Nothing can be more apparent than the variety of properties and qualities of the several metals, nothing more consistent than to prescribe a different mode of treatment to each. Sculpture in metal, partly on account of the much greater ductility and tenacity of the material, and partly on account of its peculiar colour and power of reflecting light, can rarely, however highly its degree of finish may be carried, be mistaken for that which it professes to imitate. Hence it arises that elaborate execution of details may, and indeed should, be carried in metal to the most minute perfection. Works in gold, or silver, should, as a general rule (except in instances where an overpowering display of wealth is intended, in which case art does not much signify), be confined to small dimensions, and those relatively correspondent to the associations of idea connected with the rarity and value of each. It was from inattention to these conditions that many of the largest pieces of plate in the Exhibition failed to interest us, and that the eye dwelt with much greater complacency upon the smaller than upon the larger objects.

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In several of the plastic materials, such as gutta percha, carton pierre, papier maché, canabie, stamped leather, &c. much good design was exhibited, although the tendency, more particularly in the gutta percha, was rather in the direction of a plethora of ornaments. Nature, it should be recollected, abhors monotony, even of beauty, and there is nothing so cloying and fatiguing as too much sweetness, from which perpetual plainness would be a haven of refuge. In respect to these materials a good deal of misapprehension has prevailed of late years; they have been called "shams," and a variety of names which they intrinsically in no wise deserve. When people paint and grain papier maché to make it look like oak or other valuable woods, or when they dust sand over carton pierre to make it look like stone, then certainly they perpetrate meannesses at which good taste is disgusted the instant the deception is found out; but when the materials are used simply as ornaments, either in a uniform colour, or picked out with any variety of tints, everybody recognises the nature of the material; and there can then be no more *sham* or *trick* in employing them than there would be in using Caen stone for a pulpit instead of marble, or iron for a column instead of gold.

There is, perhaps, no substance in the manufacture and design of which so great an improvement has taken place in this country within the last ten years as in that of glass. Witness, for manufacture, the glass palace and its wonderful fountain; and, for design, the exquisite articles contributed by Messrs. Green, Pellatt, Richardson, Bacchus, Rice, Harris, and others. The subject of glass, its materials, appropriate form, colour, and other conditions having been most ably treated in the last lecture of this series, renders it unnecessary now to make any further observation on the subject. We may be permitted, however, in drawing attention to some exquisite specimens of Messrs. Green's manufacture, to simply assert, that never at any other period has anything corresponding to the present perfect execution of glass-work existed; and that as soon as the cumbrous, lumpy decanters, tumblers, and rummers, in which our fathers delighted, shall have been all broken, there will be very little left to desire in respect to table glass.

With regard to china, and the group of analogous materials, such as porcelain, terra cotta, &c. time compels us to be brief. In all such objects, the fragility of the material warns us against rash projections, and yet we constantly recognise them stuck on, as though merely for the purpose of being knocked off. The primitive arrangement of the potter's wheel, and the plasticity of the material, yielding beneath his hand curves, which in Etrurian and Magna Grecian ware, we admire as exquisite, direct us, as it were, to simplicity in all works in such materials. So long as, by the readiest means, and by a little education of the workman, we might obtain forms quite as valuable and as various as those which we always have and always shall admire in the antique, there can exist no excuse for casting octagon and hexagon jugs, or making teacups up out of half a-dozen curves.

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Of the various appropriate modes of conventionalising nature, scarcely any is more agreeable than that which is frequently adopted by the skilful paper-stainer, in what are called panel papers. It consists in treating as a picture, flowers and other objects, grouped with scarcely any apparent artifice, in their natural form and sizes, and with all their lights, subdued shades and reflections, but with no cast shades. This, at first sight, would appear to be too direct an imitation of nature to be agreeable, and therefore liable to objection—and so, unless care is taken, it very frequently is. Now the method of preserving all that is requisite is effected by representing the flowers by successive blotches of body colour daubed on, with no attempt to soften the edges or conceal the method by which the effect is produced. Thus, at a little distance the decoration looks, not like a group of flowers, for that would be a mistake, but like a very clever sketch of a group of flowers framed and inserted in the panel. Where direct imitation of natural flowers, with endless tiresome repeats, are carried out, either in paper-hangings, block, or cylinder-printed goods, in carpets, damasks, or other woven hangings, the effect is rarely if ever agreeable, however marvellous the manufacturing power may be which can effect such elaborate reproductions. In woven goods, as was most clearly shown in an excellent lecture by Mr. Wornum, recently delivered at the School of Design, the conditions of manufacture constantly modify the structure of patterns; and those even which have been originally derived from nature, frequently become reformed to such an extent in putting on or draughting, that the best mode of convention, that which is induced by the process of manufacture makes that agreeable, which, if it could have been more perfectly carried out, would most probably have been extremely faulty.

The subject of surface decoration is one which involves such infinite varieties of conventional treatment, which demands so large a study of the effects of complicated geometrical subdivisions in mosaic, and, in fact, so large a field of vision, that we feel that within the limits of one lecture it is quite impossible to systematise a subject which could scarcely be fully treated in half-a-dozen. We are fain, therefore, to draw to a close this our most difficult attempt to define the principles which should determine form in the decorative arts. In doing so, however, we would pause for a few moments to remark, that, although for the sake of perspicuity we have throughout this evening adopted the language of analysis, it must be borne in mind that our divisions are

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